

Breast Cancer Awareness



Being aware of the signs and symptoms of breast cancer can help you spot abnormalities. Regular screenings can help to catch the cancer early.¹

Breast cancer develops when cells divide more rapidly than usual and accumulate to form a lump or mass of cells.² Detecting breast cancer in its early stages can increase chances of survival and lower chances of needing a mastectomy or chemotherapy treatment.

Did you know?³

- Breast cancer is the most prevalent type of cancer
- Each year in the United States, about 264,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women and about 2,400 in men
- Except for skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the United States

Self-examination

Being aware of how your breasts look and feel and carrying out regular self-examinations can help you identify any changes.² In front of a mirror, look for any swollen areas or dimples and squeeze the nipple to check for lumps or discharge.⁴ Then, when lying down or standing in the shower, raise one arm and check the breast and armpit, applying light, medium, and firm pressure.⁴ If you find a lump or notice any changes in the appearance or feel of your breast, make an appointment with a doctor as soon as possible. Do not wait until your next screening.

While breast cancer is much more common in women, it can also occur in men.

Regular screenings

Regular screenings can help detect breast cancer early. Many women have no symptoms; making screening particularly important. Screenings are usually offered to older women who are more at risk of developing breast cancer.¹

Breast screenings usually involve a mammogram, which uses x-rays to check for any abnormalities. An ultrasound may then be used to further check anything found on a mammogram. Doctors may recommend to some younger people that an ultrasound is done before a mammogram.⁵

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in women.³ Less than 1% of all breast cancer cases occur in men.⁶

Risk groups

The risk of breast cancer increases with age. A history of breast cancer in the family, inherited genes, exposure to radiation, obesity, menstruating early, entering menopause later, and having children later in life or not at all are also thought to increase risks of breast cancer.² Maintaining a healthy weight, eating well and getting regular exercise can all help to reduce the risk of breast cancer.²

Diagnosis and treatment

Biopsies can be used to diagnose breast cancer. Blood tests, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans, mammograms, bone scans, computed tomography (CT) scans and other tests can help determine its stage.⁷

Treatment depends on various factors, including the stage of the cancer. Surgery may be recommended

to remove the cancer, lymph nodes, or the breast.⁷ Systemic treatment, such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and immunotherapy, may also be recommended.⁷

If you notice anything unusual in your breast, make an appointment with a provider as soon as possible.



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3. Basic Information About Breast Cancer. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic_info/. Accessed August 17, 2022.
4. Breast self-exam. National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc. <https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-self-exam>. Accessed March 19, 2020.
5. Ultrasound. Breastcancer.org. <https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/testing/types/ultrasound>. Accessed February 26, 2020.
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7. Breast cancer: diagnosis and treatment. Mayo Clinic. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/breast-cancer/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20352475>. Accessed February 26, 2020.

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